

# MINUTES OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 21 November 2018  
(7:04 - 9:00 pm)

## PRESENT

Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe (Chair)  
Cllr Faruk Choudhury (Deputy Chair)

Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah	Cllr Sanchia Alasia	Cllr Saima Ashraf
Cllr Abdul Aziz	Cllr Toni Bankole	Cllr Simon Bremner
Cllr Princess Bright	Cllr Sade Bright	Cllr Laila M. Butt
Cllr Evelyn Carpenter	Cllr Josie Channer	Cllr John Dulwich
Cllr Edna Fergus	Cllr Irma Freeborn	Cllr Cameron Geddes
Cllr Syed Ghani	Cllr Rocky Gill	Cllr Kashif Haroon
Cllr Amardeep Singh Jamu	Cllr Jane Jones	Cllr Eileen Keller
Cllr Mohammed Khan	Cllr Donna Lumsden	Cllr Olawale Martins
Cllr Giasuddin Miah	Cllr Dave Miles	Cllr Margaret Mullane
Cllr Adegboyega Oluwole	Cllr Glenda Paddle	Cllr Simon Perry
Cllr Moin Quadri	Cllr Foyzur Rahman	Cllr Tony Ramsay
Cllr Chris Rice	Cllr Lynda Rice	Cllr Paul Robinson
Cllr Emily Rodwell	Cllr Muhammad Saleem	Cllr Faraaz Shaukat
Cllr Bill Turner	Cllr Dominic Twomey	Cllr Lee Waker
Cllr Phil Waker	Cllr Maureen Worby	

## APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Andrew Achilleos	Cllr Peter Chand	Cllr Mick McCarthy
Cllr Ingrid Robinson	Cllr Darren Rodwell	

### 30. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

### 31. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2018 were confirmed as correct.

### 32. Minutes of Sub-Committees - To note the minutes of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel held on 15 October 2018

The Assembly received and noted the minutes of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel held on 15 October 2018.

### 33. Leader's Statement

The Deputy Leader of the Council (Cllr Ashraf) presented a verbal statement on

behalf of the Leader, updating the Assembly on a range of matters since the last meeting including:

-The appointment of two Member Champions, working closely alongside Cabinet Members: Councillor Freeborn (Quality in Care) and Councillor Chris Rice (Mental Health). A work programme is being organised for these posts.

-The Innovation in Politics Award was held in Vienna, won by the Deputy Leader for Community Leadership and Engagement for the work the Council was undertaking in promoting community participation, although was no complacency about the work that lay ahead. The Council were the first UK project that has won the Innovation in Politics Award.

-The Chancellor's Budget & its impact on the borough- There was a need to maintain pressure on the Government to fund the NHS, social care and all public services after years of underfunding. The Government's Budget on 29 October 2018 would provide little relief for the Borough's residents at this difficult time.

#### **34. Appointments**

The Assembly **resolved** to appoint:

- Councillor Rahman to the Office for Raising Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) Panel;
- Councillor Khan as a trustee of the Chadwell Heath Community Trust Board; and
- Councillors Akwaboah and Saleem to the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

#### **35. Annual Report 2017/18 -Safeguarding Adults Board**

The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care Integration introduced a report on the Annual Report 2017/18 for the Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Annual Report described the work and priorities of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) from April 2017 to March 2018 and set out how the Board had worked to improve the protection of vulnerable adults across Barking and Dagenham along with its achievements in 2017/18 and key priorities into the future.

The annual reports contained contributions from a range of organisations who were involved in safeguarding vulnerable adults in Barking and Dagenham. Joint working has been effective over the past year, and the membership of the Board has strengthened. During the year, the Board had appointed a new Independent Chair. The statutory partners provided financial resources to support the SAB a to fulfil their functions and to support the undertaking of Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs).

The Annual Report had been agreed by the Safeguarding Adults Board at its meeting on 17 July 2018 and was presented and discussed at the Health & Wellbeing Board on 5 September 2018. The Health & Wellbeing Board noted the

need to improve awareness across frontline teams and the wider community about safeguarding concerns, especially around issues of exploitation and modern slavery, and on how to report concerns for attention by statutory agencies.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Integration considered that one of the Safeguarding partners, the East Basic Command Unit (BCU) needed to improve its transparency and she would be inviting the Borough Police Commander to address a future meeting of the Assembly for an update on crime and violence safeguarding issues.

In answer to a question, the Cabinet Member advised that records of care are kept including those of inspections and quality assurance.

Members welcomed the report and in particular agreed that it was a priority to help and support vulnerable adults. They were concerned to ensure that partnerships and agencies continued to work together in light of 1,632 safeguarding concerns that had been raised to the Council which was an increase on the previous year. They also noted that work on awareness of mental health was on-going and the Serious Case Review contained in the report. They were also concerned about the adult social care budgets and the effect of the introduction of Universal Credit (UC), which is was felt had put vulnerable residents at risk and raised the level of homelessness.

- (i) The Assembly **resolved** to note the contents of Annual Report of the Safeguarding Adults Board for 2017/18; and
- (ii) Noted the discussion at the Health & Wellbeing Board and add further comments to shape the priorities of the SAB through its Strategic Plan.

### **36. Annual Reports 2017/18- Adoption and Corporate Parenting- a new approach**

The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care Integration introduced the annual reports on Adoption and Corporate Parenting. They described the new approach that will be taken to producing these in future, highlighting key achievements and priorities for the coming year. One of the critical things Looked After Children needed was stability and clear permanence and this approach cut across children's care and support and not just children in care and the Council were developing a Permanency Strategy, which would underpin plans for performance through every child's journey and be developed over the next two months.

The Cabinet Member stated that greater improvement (targets) was necessary in dealing with adoption and corporate parenting however the Council was doing the best it could at a time of severe financial constraint. This included the Government's reductions in funding the Adoption Support Fund.

Members welcomed the report and considered that targets needed to be improved, also that in terms of adoption and corporate parenting, siblings should be kept together as far as possible.

The Assembly received a short video presentation in relation to Skittlz, Barking and Dagenham's Children in Care Council, made up of a range of Looked After Children that are actively consulted regarding being in care.

Members welcomed the report and video presentation.

The Assembly **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the contents of the two annual reports on adoption and corporate parenting respectively; and
- (ii) Note developments in children's social care over the last 6 months and support their reflection in a more useful, timely and purposeful strategy.

### **37. Treasury Management 2018/19 Mid-Year Review**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services introduced the Treasury Management 2018/19 Mid-Year Review. The mid-year review provided details of the current position for treasury activities and highlighted compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by the Assembly. This report was prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of practice on Treasury Management, and covered a number of areas, including the Council's Investment and Acquisition Strategy, Debt position and Commercial Lending.

The Assembly had agreed the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2018/19 on 28 February 2018, which incorporated the Prudential Indicators. This report updated Members on treasury management activities in the current year.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services underlined that this report was at a time of continuing severe financial constraint for local authorities and uncertainty about Brexit. He underlined that (draw down of debt-commercial lending had been agreed by Cabinet, with borrowing at £248m. There was a need to borrow and invest more but remain within the Council's spending limits.

The Cabinet had agreed the report at its meeting on 13 November 2018.

The Assembly **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve the revised 2018/19 Minimum Revenue Provision at Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) Note the Treasury Management Strategy Statement Mid-Year Review 2018/19;
- (iii) Note that in the first half of the 2018/19 financial year the Council complied with all 2018/19 treasury management indicators;
- (iv) Note the value of investments as at 30 September 2018 totalled £300.2m;
- (v) Note the value of long term borrowing as at 30 September 2018 totalled £612.0m. This comprised market, Public Works Loan Board, Local Authority and European Investment Bank loans;

- (vi) Note the value of short term borrowing as at 30 September 2018 totalled £144.7m; and
- (vii) Note the increased resources made available through the finance restructure to monitor the Council's Investment and Acquisitions Strategy's funding requirement and cashflow monitoring requirements.

### **38. Corporate Plan 2018 - 2022**

The Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement introduced a report on the Corporate Plan 2018-22. Over the past few years, the Council had undergone a period of significant change, focussing on establishing a new kind of council and had transformed the way it delivered services, introduced new ways of working and facilitating a change in the relationship that the Council has with residents. These changes were made as the Council was required to make savings of £48K by 2021.

In consultation with residents, the Council had shaped and defined the vision for Barking and Dagenham through the production of the Borough Manifesto. This provided a clear direction for the Council over the coming years. As an enabler and facilitator, the Council's job was to make the community's vision a reality. The Corporate Plan 2018-2022 set out the Council's contribution over the next four years to deliver the Borough Manifesto. It clearly articulated the Council's vision and priorities as it continued its journey and the transformation programme.

The Cabinet Member placed on record that the Council were delivering on the themes in the Corporate Plan, namely: a new kind of Council, Empowering People, Inclusive Growth and Citizenship and Participation. She was pleased that despite severe financial constraints, it had won the award of Council of the Year at the Local Government Chronicle Awards in 2018.

The Assembly **resolved** to approve the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2022 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

### **39. Report of a Decision of the Standards (Hearing) Sub-Committee**

The Assembly noted the outcome of the Standards (Hearing) Sub-Committee held on 28 September 2018.

Councillor Butt was invited to address the Assembly and provided an oral statement to Assembly and apologised to fellow Members and the borough's residents for breaching of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. She contended that she did not know she was required to register disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of two properties and stated that she did not mislead the Leader of the Council and Monitoring Officer. In reference to a press report in the Barking and Dagenham Post, she confirmed that she was advised and not instructed to apologise to Assembly as part of the decision of the Standards (Hearing) Sub-Committee.

#### 40. Motions

Moved by Councillor Alasia and seconded by Councillor Channer:

“Barking and Dagenham’s migrant communities contribute a huge amount to the borough and are the heart of the borough’s cultural identity.

Approximately 21% of the borough’s population is of African or Caribbean heritage and although the Council does not have precise figures, it is believed the borough is home to hundreds if not thousands, of the Windrush generation and many more come from other Commonwealth countries across the globe.

Barking and Dagenham Council expresses dismay at the ‘hostile environment’ initiated by Theresa May when she was Home Secretary and at the financial and emotional impact this has had on the Windrush generation and their families, including children and grandchildren.

This Council welcomes:

- the contribution that Eastside Heritage have undertaken over many years to capture the history and legacy of the Windrush Generation, particularly those that worked in the NHS
- the work of organisations the JCWI, BME Lawyers 4 Justice, the Runnymede Trust, MPs and the All Parliamentary Group on Race who have been campaigning on these issues, and
- the role the Caribbean High Commissions have played in lobbying the Government.

In response Barking and Dagenham Council resolves to:

- call on the Government to implement a fair compensation scheme for the emotional, financial and physical trauma the Windrush generation suffered whilst their immigration status was undefined
- Celebrating Windrush Day in Barking and Dagenham on the 22 June each year with an annual celebration to recognise and honour the enormous contribution of those who arrived between 1948 and 1971
- press the Prime Minister to call for an independent public enquiry into the Windrush scandal,
- demand the Government fully supports advice agencies in their work to achieve justice (and compensation for all losses, injury and damages to date where necessary) for all Barking and Dagenham residents of the Windrush generation,
- review our own policies and procedures to ensure we support those affected,
- support the call for fees for naturalisation to be waived for all those who have been affected, and
- oppose the criminalisation of Windrush families.”

Members of the Assembly spoke in support of the motion.

The motion was **carried** unanimously.

## **41. Questions With Notice**

### **Question 1**

#### **From Councillor Martins**

Can the Cabinet Member for Finance explain what impact the Chancellor of the Exchequer's recent Budget Announcement will have on residents in Barking and Dagenham?

#### **Response**

The Government's Budget did provide some good news for Local Authorities including Barking and Dagenham. For example, capital funding has been made available to improve roads (£0.42m for this borough in 2018/19) and additional funding has been promised to support Social Care for both Adults and Children's social care in 2019/20 which will allow the Council to support the most vulnerable in our community, although it will not be sufficient to compensate for many years of austerity and cuts to Local Government budgets, particularly social care. In addition, the social care funding is one off and the Government have not provided any long-term solutions to the growing issues in Social Care.

The Government has removed the borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account which allows Local Authorities to build some additional housing, however, it does not in itself create any new funding for Local Authorities or Housing Associations.

The Government budget made no long-term announcements about Schools funding. Although there is a small one-off capital payment for all schools (£10,000 to £50,000 per school, there is no new permanent investment in either Schools or High Needs with a likelihood of very small sub-inflation increases in funding.

The Government is still committed to the implementation of Universal Credit although they have introduced a number of measures have been introduced to mitigate the impact on individual claimants including those in Barking and Dagenham.

### **Question 2**

#### **From Councillor Perry**

After 8 years of Tory austerity, coupled with continued increases in the cost of living in London, can the relevant Cabinet Member explain what the Council is doing to ensure that key public sector workers are not priced out of Barking & Dagenham?

#### **Response**

Whilst Barking and Dagenham is one of London's most affordable boroughs, it is still very difficult for many residents to buy or rent homes on the market. Our residents and the jobs they do are vital to the London economy.

When housebuilders stopped building during the credit crunch, the Council created its own housing company, Reside, to deliver genuinely affordable homes for local people. There are now 810 households living in affordable Reside homes and we have ambitious plans to triple this to 2,529 by 2022/23. In addition, we are building an additional 397 homes for sale and 290 homes for students.

In addition to the new affordable housing being developed for Reside, the Council has also recently completed 34 new shared ownership homes at the Leys, via the HRA and 32 of those recently released have been snapped up by Barking and Dagenham residents. Rents on Reside homes will vary from 50%-80% of a market rent and we will build shared ownership homes too. The Reside and HRA homes will be affordable to those people whose households are on the London Living Wage.

Such an ambitious home building programme is only possible because the Council has set up its own regeneration company, Be First, which has the expertise and capacity to deliver these new homes for Reside by 2023 and in the process ensure that financial returns are reinvested into vital local services.

The Council are also working hard with other developers to ensure their developments provide genuinely affordable homes. We have recently approved 12,000 new homes at Barking Riverside and Beam Park half of which are affordable including homes at London Affordable Rent and London Living Rents and Shared Ownership homes.

The Council are also working with Pocket Living who are building 78 new homes, for which key workers are prioritised (incl. teachers and social workers), in Barking Town Centre (to be completed in 2019)

### **Question 3**

#### **From Councillor Haroon**

Has the Council's recruitment drive for its refuse and waste services been successful?

#### **Response**

The introduction of new service improvements is nearing completion and seen the recruitment of 62 posts in waste and street cleansing service. This is being conducted in 3 main phases, with new starters from October- December 2018.

The Council aimed to recruit 30 post in Street Cleansing, and 32 posts in Refuse. Currently these posts are being covered by agency staff, which is expensive and unstable. Initially the first wave of recruitment saw 798 applications, for 11 job roles. With most refuse posts now filled, there have been significant improvements in missed collection rates, and reduction of complaints for refuse, with a collection rate of October 2018 of 99.89%.

There is a "New Cleansing" model for town centres now in place, with coverage from 5:30 to 10:30 pm over 4 shifts. Better supervision and more mechanized



sweeping is at weekends, together with quicker response times for removal of fly tips and sweeper bags. Currently 80% of town centre team are new starters from the on-going recruitment drive.

#### **Question 4**

##### **From Councillor Saleem**

What is being done to deal with problem of fly tipping in the Borough and the perpetrators of this crime?

##### **Response**

Fly-tipping is a priority for the Council. We undertake a number of functions that address fly-tipping. These include:

- Wall of Shame – The Council has a dedicated section on the Council's website that provides images and videos of people who have been caught on camera fly-tipping. We identified 6 perpetrators since July 2018 and issued 12 Fixed Penalty Notices.
- CCTV cameras – The council has a number of CCTV cameras, intel is regularly passed to our enforcement team who deal with fly tipping to follow up actions on anyone observed fly tipping on camera. There have been in excess 20 Fly tipping Fixed Penalty Notices being issued in recent months to residents/business of Sunningdale for fly tipping at the end of the road.
- Environmental Enforcement Cameras – The council currently has 16 enviro cameras deployed, the images from the cameras are regularly reviewed and action taken.
- Working in Partnership with managing agents – The council has been approached by private housing estates and managing agents who are very interested in our wall of shame and innovative ways of enforcing to tackle fly tipping and other enviro crime.
- Fixed Penalty Notice's = The council's enforcement team have issued 137 fixed penalty notices for fly tipping since April 2018.
- Prosecutions = Street Enforcement Team have had 16 successful prosecutions in 2018 directly related to fly tipping and waste offences with a further 5 awaiting summons. Fines in the region of £8,700 have been issued to fly tipping criminals.
- Grime Crime Stickers - The council launched Grime Crime Stickers campaign in October 2018. These notify the public that cases of fly tipping are being investigated and the council is taking action.
- Leaflet drops - The council has started a programme, leafleting local residents in enviro-crime hotspots to identify local culprits. Over 200

Leaflets have been distributed in hotspot areas.

- Littering patrols - Week commencing 19/11/18 for 7 days, we have early and late littering patrols in Barking and Heathway. Street Enforcement officers primarily will be dealing with littering outside the stations, however will also undertake to issue penalties to anyone in the location obviously in breach of the PSPO.

## **Question 5**

### **From Councillor Oluwole**

Following the fire at Roding Primary School in Mayesbrook Ward, can the Cabinet Member outline what steps have been taken to minimise the disruption for children at the school?

### **Response**

We thank the London Fire Brigade for their speedy actions which limited the extent of the damage at Roding Primary School on 4 September, the day before the start of the Autumn Term. The Council immediately put into place their recovery procedures to ensure that the school could become operational as soon as possible. The school worked closely with parents and carers and provided regular progress updates through their website and social media.

Through the strong partnership working AIG plans were put in motion which were supported by the Council's term contractors and the specialist provided by AIG. The team worked hard during the week and over the weekend to ensure that the school opened its doors less than a week after the incident. Eight temporary classrooms were craned into place over the two following weekends which was a major logistics achievement itself for which we thank local residents for their co-operation and Be First are rebuilding these classrooms scheduled by early summer 2019.

### **Supplementary Question**

Councillor Oluwole enquired what steps were being taken to try and ensure that the fires may not happen again at this and other school sites. The Cabinet Member responded that schools were taking all appropriate measures.

## **Question 6**

### **From Councillor Akwaboah**

Can the relevant Cabinet Member outline what efforts the Council is making to promote vocational training for local people in the borough?

### **Response**

The majority of the Borough's secondary schools purchase an independent career advice and guidance and work experience service from Barking and Dagenham School Improvement Partnership.

Work experience is provided to 2,000 young people annually through schools, as well as an extensive range of careers and work-related learning events and 1-2-1 guidance that highlight and promote vocational pathways.

The numbers of young people stating they intend to embark on apprenticeships at post-16 is increasing year on year, with 6.7% of last year's Year 11 pupils stating they wished to pursue an apprenticeship at post-16, compared to 5.1% in the previous year. The proportion of young people going on to participate in apprenticeships is steadily increasing year on year, although there was a dip last year in line with national as the apprenticeship levy was rolled out.

The council's adult college and job shop provide:

- A closer relationship with the onsite Job Shop enables learners to enjoy the benefits of the on-site Job Brokerage service. They also provide other initiatives including the
- Talk English Project, which specifically targets Muslim women with little or no English skills, has encouraged participants to become more involved in the community as well as improving English language skills.
- In-house innovative tutor development programme 'Grow Our Own' develops opportunities for those who are non, part or fully qualified and looking to enter or return to education, either in a supportive or teaching role.
- Volunteering and training outcomes under the Work & Health programme as part of the Contractual Customer Service Standards.
- Construction team are target work experience. This allows an introduction with young people into the Construction sector and supports S106 obligations with Contractors.